Finding of No Significant Impact

Commercially Guided Visitor Use and Other Services

March 2005

Mount Rainier National Park

Introduction

The National Park Service (NPS) has completed the environmental analysis process on the Commercial Services Plan for Mount Rainier National Park.

<u>Background</u>: The Environmental Assessment (EA) presented four sets of alternatives for the Commercial Services Plan (CSP). Although the alternatives were presented separately it was noted that they could be mixed and matched in any combination. As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), all of the alternatives were evaluated against the current management of the services they describe (No Action), including against a 2001 "baseline" and against projected increases that would occur when the current moratorium on new or additional commercial services in the park is lifted. The National Park Service originally identified the preferred combination of alternatives as a combination that would include Guided Climbing Alternative 3, Guided Wilderness Alternative 2, and Additional Services Alternative 2.

During the public review process for the EA, over 1,900 letters were received, most via the internet (with many of the electronic comments very similar in tone and/or substance). As a result, the planning team reconvened to review and assess the responses, and subsequently moved on to develop a re- combination of elements of the alternatives as reflected below in the Selected Alternative. The Selected Alternative responds to the issues and concerns raised by the public during the review process.

Purpose and Need for the Commercial Services Plan

The purpose of a Commercial Services Plan (CSP) is to provide a mechanism for establishing the types and levels of commercial activities that are necessary and/or appropriate for the park, as well as to define the most effective and efficient methods for managing the activities. It includes an evaluation process to determine appropriate new commercial services. A CSP is an implementation plan with a 5- 10 year life.

Changes to the way commercial services are managed in the park are needed to respond to:

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- 1) Changes in regulations authorizing commercial services in National Parks;
- 2) The need to end a temporary moratorium on park commercial services;
- 3) Goals established by the recent park General Management Plan (GMP);
- 4) The expiration of the contract for most guided commercial activities; and
- 5) The need to manage commercial use so that such use is more consistent with the park's wilderness management goals.

Regulations that apply to commercial services providers in National Parks are changing. Without a park plan to identify limits on Commercial Use Authorizations (CUAs) or (as they are currently called) Incidental Business Permits (IBPs), these authorizations would be issued to all qualified applicants with little ability to control numbers. (IBPs will remain in effect until 36 CFR 52 is finalized (unknown date), then CUAs will replace IBPs.) In Mount Rainier National Park, beyond determining that the applicant had or could obtain the appropriate insurance, business licensing and other administrative qualifications, the only existing limits that would apply to these authorizations are the Wilderness Management Plan overnight use limits. Recognizing this, the park imposed a moratorium on all new IBPs in 1998 to avoid the potential for adverse effects on park resources from the establishment of new (and increased numbers of) commercial services.

Existing Wilderness Management Plan limits only affect overnight visitor use. They were developed based on the physical carrying capacity of designated camps and zones and have been modified up or down over time to reflect changing use patterns and conditions. While they do serve as overall limits, many are likely beyond the other components of carrying capacity – social and resource. In addition, these limits did not differentiate between commercial and independent visitor use.

The Mount Rainier National Park General Management Plan (2002) calls for the establishment of a commercial services plan to guide the management of park commercial services. With the completion of the GMP, modifying park commercial services to be more compatible with current management goals and objectives and ending the temporary moratorium on the establishment of new or additional commercial services in Mount Rainier National Park were identified. Over time, services that were once identified as necessary have become readily available outside the park. Visitation, visitor needs (including the demand for commercial services), and visitor demographics have also changed. The CSP is needed to identify the management actions required to achieve the goals for commercial services identified in the GMP.

At the same time, the contract for the concessioner that provides numerous commercially guided activities in the park has expired (October 31, 2001) and has been extended three times since then, pending the completion of the GMP and the development of a park Commercial Services Plan. Existing commercial activities, including guided climbing, guided wilderness use and guided alpine wilderness use could undergo changes upon issuance of a new contract. Specifically, the Commercial Services Plan evaluates alternatives for establishing new limits and conditions for existing, new

and modified commercially guided overnight and day use activities, including climbing, wilderness, alpine wilderness, day hiking, commercial camping, etc.

There is also a need for park commercial use to be more compatible with park wilderness management goals, including party size limits, route marking limitations and others.

In developing the commercially guided climbing, wilderness and alpine wilderness use alternatives for the CSP, the planning team sought to offer visitors more choices in purveyors of guided activities, different types of guided experiences and different locations where guided activities are conducted. In addition to goals related to resource protection and a quality visitor experience, as noted in the plan (see *Goals* section in the Commercial Services Plan) the following goals were considered common to all:

- Evaluate alternatives that offer visitors more choice both in the number of service providers and in the types of trips offered;
- Allocate some commercial free time zones and areas;
- Manage existing commercial services at or about the same level as currently offered
 to prevent the dramatic increase in guided climbing over time allowed by the existing
 limits;
- Increase the effectiveness of park commercial service providers in providing resource protection messages to commercially guided park visitors;
- Increase the safe execution of commercially guided activities on Mount Rainier; and
- Ensure that commercial services do not lessen or detract from the experiences of independent park visitors.

Guided Climbing

The following specific goals were considered in developing the guided climbing alternatives:

- Continue to enable commercially guided climbing as both a necessary and appropriate park use.
- Revise the potential maximum number of guides and clients that would be able to participate in commercial activities on the Muir Route to be more consistent with the actual numbers occurring now.
- Increase guided climbing on routes identified as High Use and Moderate Use Climbing Zones (Emmons and Kautz Routes) in the GMP.
- Eliminate or modify commercial use of some sensitive areas.
- Consider having more concessioner client training on route (like current IBPs).

Guided Wilderness Use

The following specific goals were considered in developing the guided wilderness use alternatives:

- Continue to enable commercially guided wilderness use as an appropriate park use.
- Avoid increasing guided wilderness use to limit impacts on the non-guided public using wilderness campsites which are already filled to capacity during peak periods.
- Continue to allow commercial use of most trails and wilderness camps with some restrictions.

Guided Alpine Wilderness Use

The following specific goals were considered in developing the guided alpine wilderness use alternatives:

- Continue to enable commercially guided alpine wilderness use as an appropriate park use.
- Increase educational opportunities for commercially guided alpine wilderness use.
- Limit guided alpine wilderness use to existing authorized areas [Alpine Winthrop, Alpine Paradise (Paradise Glacier/Nisqually Glacier)].

Additional Services

Finally, in managing existing commercial services and in regulating new commercial services, the following additional overall goals were considered:

- Identify appropriate new commercial services activities that would increase the diversity of day use commercial services in summer and winter.
- Increase commercial educational opportunities.
- For towing, increase the number of commercial service providers to provide better service to visitors.
- Increase the range of appropriate services to park visitors where it would not cause more impacts to park resources.
- Begin to implement the GMP by allowing shuttle services on the Westside Road and parkwide.
- Develop an evaluation process for new commercial services that considers impacts on park resources, park operations and visitor use.

[Note: The Commercial Services Plan does not propose changes to the Guest Services, Incorporated (GSI) contract because no significant changes can be made to that contract until it expires in 2012 unless agreed upon by the park and GSI. GSI provides food, lodging and gift services (as well as ski instruction and ski and snowshoe rental) in the park.]

Selected Alternative

The selected alternative is a modification of the NPS preferred alternative derived chiefly by re- combining elements of the alternatives presented in the EA. It has been modified to include minor corrections (detailed in an Errata to the EA); changes in the alternatives because of public comments; additional clarification regarding goals, operational and other issues; and to increase consistency with other park planning documents. Most modifications resulted from staff analysis of comments received during the public review period; other modifications resulted from minor corrections that produced new information during staff analysis regarding the potential consequences of implementing the alternatives. As reflected in the Mitigation Matrix and related discussion (below), the selected alternative would have *either* similar or lesser impacts than those described for the action alternatives in the EA. There are no substantive new elements or changes.

Climbing Concession Contracts

The selected alternative identifies three climbing concessioners (A, B and C) that would provide equal levels of service for guided climbing and other authorized activities, except on the Muir Route (where one concessioner would be able to provide a higher level of service – more people and user nights). These concession contracts would also provide mountaineering day schools, client (and potentially public) shuttle transportation, guided alpine training, guided winter day use activities, and guided winter overnight trips.

On the Muir Route, Concessioner A would be able to guide a maximum of 24 clients and guides per night (seven days a week), up to 3,336 user nights per year. Concessioner A would also be able to lead 24 clients and guides in a mountaineering day school. Overnight use would be limited to Camp Muir and there would be a maximum of 12 clients and guides per party and a maximum ratio of no more than four clients per guide.

On the Muir Route Concessioners B and C would each be able to guide a maximum of 12 clients and guides per night (seven days a week), up to 1,668 user nights each per year. Concessioners B and C could each lead 12 clients and guides each in a mountaineering day school. Overnight use would be rotated among Camp Muir, the Muir Snowfield and Ingraham Flats. Like Concessioner A, there would be a maximum of 12 clients and guides per party and a maximum guiding ratio of no more than four clients per guide. On the Muir Snowfield, camping would only be allowed in an area designated for concessioner groups.

On the Kautz Route, Concessioners A, B and C could each lead up to 80 clients and guides per summer and up to 40 clients and guides per winter (both subject to a maximum of two parties per week – rotating use among the concessioners and without Friday and Saturday night stays). The maximum party size and client to guide ratios would be the same as the Muir Route.

On the Emmons Route, Concessioners A, B and C would each be able to lead up to 120 clients and guides per summer and up to 40 clients and guides in winter. Each concessioner could lead one trip per week (with no Friday or Saturday night stays). The maximum party size and client to guide ratios would be the same as the Muir Route.

On Other Routes (Gibraltar Ledge, Gibraltar Chute, Nisqually Icecliff, Nisqually Cleaver, Nisqually Icefall, Fuhrer's Finger, Fuhrer's Thumb, Wilson Headwall, Kautz Cleaver, Kautz Headwall, Liberty Wall, Liberty Ridge, Willis Wall, Curtis Ridge, Russell Cliffs, and Little Tahoma), Concessioners A, B and C could each lead up to 40 clients and guides per year. There would be a maximum party size of five clients and guides and a maximum of seven nights per trip.

Finally, Concessioners A, B and C could lead the following activities subject to the following restrictions:

• Alpine Training (12 clients and guides per party, 4:1 client to guide ratio, and four trips per year)

- Guided Winter Day Use Activities (12 clients and guides per party, 5:1 client to guide ratio, maximum of 20 trips per winter and maximum of one trip per day)
- Guided 5- night Winter Trips (12 clients and guides per party, 4:1 client to guide ratio if glacier travel or 5:1 ratio without glacier travel, five trips per winter and a maximum of 4 nights in any one management zone)
- Guided 14- night Winter Trips (12 clients and guides per party, maximum 4:1 client to guide ratio if glacier travel or 5:1 ratio without glacier travel, two trips per winter, and a maximum of 4 nights in any one management zone)

Guided Visitor Activity CUAs

The revised preferred alternative would also allow:

- 18 Single Trip Climbing Guide CUAs;
- 5 Summer Guided Wilderness Trip CUAs (offering one 5- night trip each);
- 2 Winter Guided Wilderness CUAs (including guided day use activities, 5 five- night trips and 2 fourteen- night trips);
- 10 Day Guiding CUAs (offering step- on guide opportunities with no predetermined limit at this time and 40 day use hiking opportunities each per summer);
- 5 Westside (and eventually Carbon River) Road Bicycling Tours (one group each per week);
- 5 Photography and Art Course CUAs (one group each per week);
- 10 front- country Commercial Camping CUAs; and
- 5 Guided Road- Based Bicycle Tour CUAs (two groups each per year).

Other Service CUAs

- io Shuttle CUAs, and
- Towing CUAs with no predetermined limit at this time.

Common to All Objectives

Finally, there would be a number of features common to all commercial services opportunities, including, but not limited to the following:

- New process for evaluating new proposals/ideas for non-concession_commercial services (those not already identified as appropriate in the plan);
- High elevation commercial free area;
- New low elevation commercial free area;
- Visitor use limits for commercial day and overnight activities;
- Requirement for commercial services providers to both be trained in the NPS and park mission and values and to pass this information onto their clients;
- A series of impact avoidance, minimization and mitigation strategies to effectively limit impacts to park resources, including the experiences of other visitors; and a

• Requirement for commercial service providers to shuttle their clients within the park (with the exception of step- on Day Guides).

Other conditions regarding guided climbing concessioners and CUA holders are detailed in the *revised* plan.

Differences between the Selected Alternative and Other Alternatives Considered

The primary differences between the selected alternative and the other action alternatives considered in the EA are as follows, with the reason for the change noted in brackets.

Climbing Concessioners

- Redistributes some CUA activities (from Guided Wilderness, Guided Alpine Wilderness and Additional Services) to the climbing concessioners (see changes and explanations in these categories below) [to increase viability of climbing concessions and the services they offer];
- Shows an increase in guided climbing over the 2001 baseline by increasing Muir Route usage from approximately 4,000 user nights per year to 6,672 user nights per year (primarily by increasing allocations during the peak season) [to ensure that both the current model one night trips and multiple night expedition style trips would be possible];
- Redistributes some Muir Route usage among concessioners so that distribution of opportunities on this route are not equal (but opportunities on other routes and for other activities remain equal) [to allow Concessioner "A" to more closely resemble the current concession opportunity];
- Emphasizes that the climbing concession contracts are not facility based [Gombu (client shelter) cannot be conveyed to another concessioner and does not meet Camp Muir Historic District or Mount Rainier National Historic Landmark District standards or building codes];
- Eliminates potential for concessioner water system at Camp Muir [water system cannot be made compliant with implementation of Clean Water Act regulations].
- Reincorporates the use of commercial camping on the Muir Snowfield in a new designated area [to distinguish between commercial and independent camping impacts in this sensitive area];
- Adds an operational rotation among Camp Muir, the Muir Snowfield and Ingraham Flats for two climbing concessioners with lower overall limits [to minimize potential logistical conflicts associated with multiple concessioners on this route];
- Applies summer and winter seasonal restrictions for the Emmons and Kautz Routes [to reduce the potential for summer crowding];

- Reduces the proposed limits for the Kautz Route [to recognize logistical issues, including fewer camps (see below) and the perception of crowding on this shorter season route];
- Designates and reduces proposed limits for Other Routes [recognizes that some
 Other Routes are actually part of traditional Muir, Emmons and Kautz routes or
 Commercial Free Areas and reduces confusion in the application of route use for
 concessioners and Single Trip Guides];
- Applies a changed operational rotation on the Kautz Route [to recognize the reduced number of designated camps on this route];
- Designates maximum limits for concessioners, including commercial free weekends, on Liberty Ridge [to limit the effect of commercial use on independent use]; and
- Increases Mountaineering Day School limits consistent with concessioner limits on Muir Route [allows visitors to choose among concessioners for traditional one night climb].

Single Trip Guides

- Modifies certification requirements and notes that they apply only to the lead guide [to limit confusion about what requirements and certifications were applicable];
- Phases in program [to allow adjustment of new program if needed];
- Allows reservations before the public reservation system opens and allows use of the major climbing routes (Muir, Emmons and Kautz) [to allow adequate planning for international trips and to compensate for the reduction in Other Route availability];
- Designates maximum limits on Liberty Ridge [to limit the effect of commercial use on independent use].

Commercial Free Areas

- Changes the high elevation commercial free area Success Cleaver clockwise to Ptarmigan Ridge (inclusive) from 6,000 feet elevation on the lower edge to 13,500 feet elevation on the upper edge [establishes contiguous area that has limited effects on skill building climbs for commercial climbers. Liberty Ridge remains commercial];
- Adds a low elevation commercial free area on south side of the Wonderland Trail between the Muddy Fork Cowlitz River westward to the Nisqually River/Eagle Peak area and encompassing the Tatoosh Range within the park. A low elevation commercial free area on the south side of the Wonderland Trail between the Muddy Fork Cowlitz River, westward to the Nisqually River/Eagle Peak area and encompassing the Tatoosh Range within the park. This area would be defined as the area between the Nisqually River and the Muddy Fork of the Cowlitz River, south of the Wonderland Trail and Stevens Canyon Road (whichever is further south). It would not include the Longmire Campground or administrative access road to Skate Creek Road (USFS Road 52). [Responds to public comments and

management's desire to retain flexibility by not allocating all possible use in all possible areas.]

Guided Wilderness

- Splits combined summer and winter wilderness trips into Summer and Winter CUAs;
 - Winter Wilderness would allow a variety of trips (one trip per day for winter guided day use activities, five 5- night trips per winter, and two 14night trips per winter) for each of 3 concessioners and 2 CUAs [combines activities with similar guiding skills and increases viability of climbing concessioners];
 - o Summer Wilderness would allow one trip to each of five CUAs [increases visitor choice among CUA providers];
- Adds some Additional Services activities to Overnight Wilderness (former Muir Winter Guides, Winter Day Use and Mountain Circumnavigations) [combines activities requiring similar qualifications for guides under fewer CUAs]; and
- Eliminates use of the Wonderland Trail in July and August [minimizes impact of commercial Wonderland Trail use on independent visitors and recognizes that demand exceeds availability].

Guided Alpine Wilderness

• Eliminates alternatives and reduces number of opportunities by adding Alpine Training to climbing concessioners [to combine activities requiring similar qualifications and to allow future flexibility in offering educational opportunities at a later date to non- profit organizations].

Additional Services

- Halves and divides the number of Guided Winter Day Use CUAs (by giving three opportunities to climbing concessioners and two to separate CUAs) [to increase viability for concessioners and reduce number of CUAs];
- Reduces number of Guided Winter Day Use trips from one per day to 20 per winter [limits impact of trips on already high winter day use in some areas];
- Splits former Muir winter guiding activity between climbing concessioners and Guided Winter Wilderness and allows unspecified five- night winter trips [to increase flexibility for guides and visitors];
- Splits former Mountain Circumnavigation between climbing concessioners and Guided Winter Wilderness and allows unspecified fourteen- night winter trips [same as above];
- Eliminates CUA requirement for Road Tours [to increase opportunity and flexibility for commercial guides and visitors and to eliminate administrative management of proposed CUAs];

- Allows Road Tour guides to conduct short walks up to one mile from parking areas [increases opportunity for visitors to get better information about park resources and values, depending on the quality and education of the guide];
- Combines opportunities for Step- On Guides and Summer Guided Day Hiking into Day Guides [combines similar opportunities into one category to minimize administrative management];
- Allows step- on portion of Day Guides to occur year round [increases opportunities for guides and visitors and similar to Road Tours, allows visitors to get more information about park resources and values that they would otherwise not receive];
- Reduces number of combined Day Guide opportunities from 10 CUAs each (Step- On Guides and Summer Guided Day Hiking) to 10 CUAs total [fewer CUAs would reduce administrative management of this new activity];
- Modifies group size and ratio for Day Guides, Road Tours and Photography and Art Courses from 14:1 to 11:1 [increases consistency for these commercial day use activities with Wilderness Management Plan overnight group size limits];
- Limits Day Guides and Road Tours to areas that do not conflict with NPS interpretive programming [to minimize visitor confusion regarding differences between park and commercial programming];
- Increases season dates for Guided Bicycling [to make season consistent with others in plan]; and
- Modifies client to guide ratio from required to recommended for Day Guides and Road Tours [to increase flexibility for visitors and guides].

Other components of the Selected Alternative not mentioned above or in the description of the Selected Alternative remain the same as described in the preferred combination of alternatives identified in the Commercial Services Plan and Environmental Assessment. This includes the host of impact avoidance, minimization and mitigation strategies that limit the potential for formerly ongoing impacts to park resources to occur.

Summary of Other Alternatives Considered

Although portions of many of these alternatives have been incorporated into the selected alternative noted above, the summaries of them that were in the EA are repeated here in their entirety to show the full range of alternatives evaluated in the plan/EA.

<u>Commercially Guided Climbing Alternatives</u> <u>Guided Climbing Alternative 1</u>: No Action: Continue Current Management (Increase Use)

Although this alternative is termed "no action" under NEPA, it would actually be a continuation of current management with respect to commercial services. It is important to note, however, that with the lifting of the moratorium, there would be a dramatic difference in the way commercial services are managed now, compared to the way they would be managed under the this alternative in the future. There would be an expanded range of opportunities and increased use for commercial services in the park once the current moratorium on new commercial services was lifted. Limits on these services would come only from existing Wilderness Management Plan overnight use

limits. Differences in the management of these services would come from changes to commercial services management regulations and these activities would then be managed under the new set of Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) guidelines, rather than the foregoing set of Incidental Business Permit (IBP) guidelines.

Muir and Other Routes: Guided climbing on the Muir, Kautz and Other Routes would continue to be managed under one concessioner, who could continue to guide a maximum of 59 people per night (maximum 8,260 summer user nights), seven days a week, with 35 spaces per night reserved at Camp Muir, 12 on the Muir Snowfield and 12 at Ingraham Flats. This concessioner would also continue to guide on all Other Routes (except the Emmons) subject to competition with the public using the public reservation system for overnight spaces (there are no people or user night limits other than would occur through competition with the public). A maximum of approximately 10,080 user nights (with 5,040 people) would be available on the Kautz Route for independent and commercial use. This concessioner could also continue to use an unlimited number of spaces per day in a Mountaineering Day School with a minimum guide to client ratio of 1:11.

Emmons Route: Guided climbing on the Emmons Route would continue to be managed through Incidental Business Permits eventually changed to Commercial Use Authorizations and would increase until limited by Wilderness Management Plan overnight use limits, resulting in an increased number of CUAs. Each CUA could continue to have 12 people per group and would be limited to 3- night climbs (and a portion of an estimated 10,800 summer user nights divided among CUA and independent use). No mountaineering day school opportunities would be available. All training would be done on route or outside the park. Staggered starting dates among CUAs would avoid some overlap. Friday and Saturday nights would continue to be commercial free.

<u>Guided Climbing Alternative 2</u>: Maintain Muir Route Use and Increase Competition and Use on Emmons, Kautz and Other Routes

In this alternative, all climbing routes (except the Comet Falls approach to the Kautz Route and Fuhrer's Finger), all camps except the Muir Snowfield, and all trails would be available for commercial use. Guided climbing would be managed through one concessioner on the Muir Route and four concessioners on the Emmons, Kautz and Other routes and would be limited to a maximum of 4,000 (4,000 user nights) on the Muir Route, 480 (est. 1,440 user nights each) on the Emmons and Kautz Routes and 400 (est. 1,200 user nights) on Other Routes. The four Emmons concessioners could lead a greater number of trips than the current IBP holders can and could do so on the Emmons, Kautz and Other routes. All would be able to lead groups of 12 but would use staggered starts to avoid becoming one large group and/or to avoid overlap (Emmons and Kautz Routes). There would be daily climbs on the Muir Route and each concessioner on the Emmons and Kautz Routes would be able to take one group every other week. There would be a maximum of approximately 5,360 people and 8,080 user nights in this alternative.

On the Muir Route, 24 spaces would be available for a Mountaineering Day School and there would be a maximum of 36 clients and guides who could camp at Camp Muir (36) or Ingraham Flats (12).

On the Emmons Route, commercially guided groups could camp up to one night each at Glacier Basin and Inter Glacier and up to two nights at Camp Schurman or Emmons Flats. There would continue to be no commercial use on Friday and Saturday nights. No Mountaineering Day School spaces would be allocated. Training would be on route, outside the park or through the Muir concessioner.

On the Kautz Route, there would be no commercial use on Friday and Saturday nights and as with the Emmons Route, no Mountaineering Day School Spaces would be allocated.

On Other Routes, weekend use would be permitted and each Emmons concessioner could take up to five people on any route, up to 100 people per year. Training would be on route or outside the park.

<u>Guided Climbing Alternative 3 (Preferred)</u>: Maintain, but Redistribute Muir Route Use and Increase Emmons, Kautz and Other Route Use, while Increasing Competition on all Climbing Routes and identifying some Commercial Free Areas

In this alternative, many climbing routes (except Liberty Ridge, Sunset Amphitheatre, Sunset Ridge (including the Puyallup Glacier), Tahoma Glacier and South Mowich Glacier) and the Comet Falls approach to the Kautz Route and Fuhrer's Finger, most camps except the Muir Snowfield and Ingraham Flats, and all trails would be available for commercial use. Guided climbing would be managed through three equal concessioners, who would have equal access to all routes, and limited to a maximum of 4,000 (4,000 user nights) on the Muir Route, 480 people (est. 1,440 user nights each) on the Emmons and Kautz Routes and 300 (est. 900 user nights) on Other Routes. In comparison to Climbing Alternative 2, a greater variety of trip lengths could be offered due to minimized group overlap. In this alternative and Alternative 4 a new commercial services opportunity would be added: Single Trip Guides. Eighteen Single Trip Guides (est. 540 user nights) not associated with concessioners or other CUA holders could apply for permits to lead guided climbs on a variety of routes subject to some restrictions. As in Alternative 2, all would be able to lead groups of 12 (except on Other Routes) and would use staggered starts. Each concessioner could conduct daily climbs on the Muir Route and climbs every third week on the Emmons and Kautz Routes. There would be a maximum of approximately 5,350 people and 8320 user nights in this alternative.

On the Muir Route, 36 spaces would be available for Mountaineering Day Schools and there would be a maximum of 36 commercially guided people per night at Camp Muir.

On the Emmons Route, commercially guided groups could camp up to one night at Glacier Basin and Inter Glacier and up to two nights at Camp Schurman and Emmons Flats. There would continue to be no commercial use on Friday and Saturday nights.

No Mountaineering Day School Spaces would be allocated. Training would be on route, outside the park or through Muir-based schools within limits.

On Other Routes, weekend use would be permitted and each concessioner could take up to five people on any non- restricted route, up to 100 people each per year. Training would be on route or outside the park.

In this alternative, 18 Single Trip Guide CUAs would also be allocated to enable climbs by national and international guides to train clients on Mount Rainier. Each could guide one small group for up to 6- nights on any allowable route subject to certain restrictions.

<u>Guided Climbing Alternative 4</u>: Redistribute some Use from the Muir to the Emmons Route, while reducing Muir, Kautz and Other Route Use and identifying some Commercial Free Areas

In this alternative, most climbing routes (except the Tahoma Glacier, Sunset Amphitheatre and Liberty Ridge) as well as the Comet Falls approach to the Kautz Route and Fuhrer's Finger, most camps, except the Muir Snowfield and Glacier Basin, and all trails would be available for commercial use. Guided climbing would be managed through one concessioner on Muir and Other Routes and one concessioner on the Emmons, Kautz and Other Routes, and would be limited to a maximum of 3,000 (est. 3,000 user nights) on the Muir Route, 560 (est. 1,680 user nights) on the Emmons Route, 240 (est. 720 user nights) on the Kautz Route and 200 (est. 600 user nights) on Other Routes. Both concessioners would be able to lead groups of 12 (except on Other Routes) and would use staggered starts to avoid overlap. Daily climbs on the Muir Route would be diminished and each concessioner would be able to offer more frequent climbs (including daily within limits) on the Emmons Route, including on Friday and Saturday nights. Eighteen Single Trip Guides (90 people and an est. 540 user nights) not associated with concessioners or other CUA holders could apply for permits to lead guided climbs on a variety of routes subject to some restrictions. There would be a maximum of approximately 4,090 people and 6,540 user nights in this alternative.

On the Muir Route, 24 spaces would be available for a Mountaineering Day School and there would be a maximum of 36 clients and guides who could camp at Camp Muir (36) or Ingraham Flats (12).

On the Emmons Route, commercially guided groups could camp at Inter Glacier, Camp Schurman or Emmons Flats. Unlike other alternatives, commercial use of the Emmons Route would include Friday and Saturday nights. No Mountaineering Day Schools spaces would be allocated. Training would be on route, outside the park or through the Muir/Other concessioner.

On the Kautz Route, there would be no commercial use on Friday and Saturday nights. Training would be on route, outside the park or through the Muir/Other concessioner.

On Other Routes, no weekend use would be permitted and each concessioner could take up to two small groups per week, up to 100 each per year.

This alternative would also include the 18 Single Trip Guides discussed above in Alternative 3.

<u>Commercially Guided Wilderness Alternatives</u> <u>Guided Wilderness Alternative 1</u>: No Action (Increase Use)

This alternative would be similar to Guided Climbing Alternative I above with respect to the lifting of the moratorium and the increase in services and use. Guided Wilderness trips would continue to be managed through IBPs changing to CUAs and would increase until limited by Wilderness Management Plan Overnight Use limits.

Guided Wilderness Alternative 2: Increase Competition, Flexibility and Use

In this alternative, all trails and camps would be available for commercial use. Guided wilderness use would be managed through three CUAs and limited to a maximum of 396 people (2,520 user nights) annually. Each CUA could lead up to six groups in winter and five in summer, resulting in the greatest number of trips (and the greatest number of 14-day trips) offered. This is the only wilderness alternative that offers summer guided small group travel and camping in cross- country areas.

<u>Guided Wilderness Alternative 3 (Preferred)</u>: Increase Competition, Maintain Use and Reduce Commercial Use Impacts on Summer Independent Use

In this alternative, all trails and camps would be available for commercial use. Guided wilderness use would be managed through five CUAs and limited to a maximum of 120 people (1,140 user nights) annually. Each CUA could lead one group in winter (14-nights) and one group in summer (5- nights). Summer cross- country use would not be permitted.

Guided Wilderness Alternative 4: Increase Competition and Flexibility and Maintain Use

In this alternative, all trails and camps would be available for commercial use; however there would be no use of Indian Bar or Summerland camps on Friday or Saturday nights. Guided wilderness use would be managed through two CUAs and limited to a maximum of 144 people annually (840 user nights). In summer, each CUA could lead up to six trips (one 14- night trip and five 7- night trips), subject to some restrictions. Summer crosscountry use would not be permitted. In winter, each CUA could lead up to three 14-night trips.

<u>Commercially Guided Alpine Wilderness Alternatives</u> Guided Alpine Wilderness Alternative 1: No Action (Increase Use)

Guided alpine wilderness use would continue to be managed under one concessioner, and IBPs converted to CUAs and would expand until limited by the Wilderness Management Plan overnight use limits.

Guided Alpine Wilderness Alternative 2 (Preferred): Maintain Competition and Use

In this alternative, Alpine Paradise/Alpine Nisqually and Alpine Winthrop would be available in summer or winter. Guided alpine wilderness use would be managed through five CUAs (the fewest number among the alternatives) and limited to a maximum of four 4- night trips each. There would be a maximum of 240 people annually (960 user nights). There would be no use of Camps Muir, Schurman and Hazard.

Guided Alpine Wilderness Alternative 3: Offer a Moderate Increase in Competition and Use

In this alternative, Alpine Paradise/Alpine Nisqually and Alpine Winthrop would be available in summer or winter. Guided alpine wilderness use would be managed through eight CUAs (moderate in comparison to Alternatives 2 and 4) and limited to a maximum of three 4- night trips each. There would be a maximum of 288 people annually (1,152 user nights), slightly higher than Alternatives 2 or 4. There would be no use of Camps Muir, Schurman and Hazard.

Guided Alpine Wilderness Alternative 4: Increase Competition and Maintain Use

In this alternative, Alpine Paradise/Alpine Nisqually and Alpine Winthrop would be available in summer or winter. Guided alpine wilderness use would be managed through ten CUAs and limited to a maximum of two 4- night trips. This alternative offers the greatest number of CUAs but the fewest number of trips. There would be a maximum of 240 people (960 user nights) annually. There would be no use of Camps Muir, Schurman and Hazard.

<u>Additional Services Alternatives</u> <u>Additional Services Alternative 1</u>: No Action (Continue Current Management) – Increased Use and Services

In this alternative, the accompanying changes proposed by the Commercial Services Plan document would not be adopted (and "No Action" would be selected). As a result, the moratorium on new commercial services that had been in place until the completion of that plan would be lifted making it possible for a variety of increased opportunities for new commercial services and increased use. While no limits on day use have been established, overnight use limits would increase until the Wilderness Management Plan limits were met.

<u>Additional Services Alternative 2 (Preferred)</u>: Adopt Commercial Services Plan, including a New Commercial Services Evaluation Process, and Identify Limits for a Wide Range of New, Existing and/or Expanded Commercial Services

This alternative would contain a suite of options for the following expanded guided day use activities, including road tours, summer day hiking, winter activities, bicycle tours, shuttles and group frontcountry camping. In addition, they would include the following new commercial services opportunities: photography and art courses, step- on guides, Westside Road bicycle tours, Westside Road shuttles, and Camp Muir winter guides. A new evaluation process for new commercial services, as well as increased towing services would also be available. There would be no changes to the Guest Services, Inc. contract until that contract expired in 2012.

Alternatives Considered But Rejected

The following alternatives were also considered but rejected in the EA:

- Eliminating Commercial Use in Low Elevation Wilderness,
- Making Snow play a Commercially Supervised Activity,
- Commercial- Free (Low Elevation Designated) Trails,
- Not Establishing Limits for Commercial Services,
- Commercially Operated Campgrounds,
- Concessioner- Only Guided Non- Summit Mountaineering (Alpine Training),
- Concessioner- Only Guided Day Use Activities,
- Not Allowing Firewood Sales, and
- Establishing a Percentage of Commercial vs. Non- Commercial Use.

In the Errata, some additional alternative variations considered but rejected were also noted:

- Shuttle Requirements,
- Alternating Commercial Free Areas,
- Weekend Commercial Use on All Routes,
- Free Guiding,
- Whole Park Commercial,
- Not Establishing Client to Guide Ratios, and
- Different Numbers of Concessioners or CUAs.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

As described in the National Environmental Policy Act, the Environmentally Preferred Alternative is the alternative that would:

- Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- Ensure for all Americans, safe, healthful, productive and esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
- Preserve important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our natural heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
- Achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
- Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

In the environmental assessment, Alternative 3: Guided Climbing, Alternative 3: Guided Wilderness, Alternative 2: Guided Alpine Wilderness and Alternative 2: Additional

Services were designated as the environmentally preferred alternatives. These alternatives contained the widest range of options with the greatest degree of impact avoidance, minimization and mitigation strategies to manage commercial services in Mount Rainier National Park. Like other action alternatives, the strategies embodied in these alternatives would have ensured the highest quality of resource preservation and the greatest array of necessary and appropriate visitor use opportunities.

The selected alternative is modeled after the preferred alternatives and would have similar effects and therefore would also be considered environmentally preferred.

Why the Selected Alternative Will Not Have a Significant Effect

As documented in the EA, the NPS has determined that the selected alternative can be implemented with no significant adverse effects on air quality, water quality, geological hazards, soils and vegetation, wildlife, special status species, prehistoric and historical archeology, ethnographic resources, historic structures and cultural landscapes, visitor experience, wilderness, park operations and the socioeconomic environment. NEPA requires that environmental decision making include the analysis of significance, based on the following factors:

Beneficial and Adverse Effects

The selected alternative has a wide range of beneficial and adverse effects (see Impact Mitigation Matrix below). As shown below in the impact mitigation matrix, these short-and long- term effects would not result in impairment. There would be negligible to minor beneficial and adverse effects on air quality; negligible to moderate adverse and beneficial effects on water quality; negligible to moderate adverse effects coupled with similar beneficial effects on soils and vegetation; negligible to moderate adverse effects combined with negligible beneficial effects on wildlife; negligible to minor adverse effects coupled with negligible to moderate beneficial effects on cultural resources; a series of short and long- term negligible to moderate beneficial and adverse effects on visitor experience; negligible to moderate beneficial and adverse effects on wilderness; negligible to moderate adverse effects and negligible to minor beneficial effects on park operations; and negligible to minor impacts on the socioeconomic environment.

Degree of effect on public health or safety

The selected alternative will not adversely affect public health or safety. Rather, the selected alternative contains a wide array of actions and mitigation strategies designed to minimize the degree of risk associated with guided activities in the park.

<u>Unique characteristics of the geographic area, such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park</u> lands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas

The selected alternative will not impact unique characteristics of the area, including prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers or ecologically critical areas. The proposed actions call for changes to the degree of use of the environment by commercially guided park visitors but will not result in the loss of such characteristics

because these characteristics are either not present or not affected by the selected alternative.

Degree to which effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial

While the idea of establishing limits for commercial use has been relatively controversial, this action and the other actions proposed in the selected alternative do not have highly controversial effects on the human environment. The effects on the human environment are known and have been described in the EA.

<u>Degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration</u>

The preferred alternative neither establishes an NPS precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represents a decision in principle about a future consideration. Evaluating actions for the Camp Muir Development Concept Plan is linked to, but is not determined by the Commercial Services Plan.

<u>Degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures or objects listed on the National Register of Historic Places or may cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historic resources</u>

The selected alternative will have negligible to minor adverse effects (no adverse effect) and moderate beneficial effects on cultural resources. It will not result in the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historic resources.

<u>Degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its critical</u> habitat

While there are actions that would be associated with the implementation of the selected alternative that have the potential to affect rare species, these actions would primarily be a continuation of current management. Regardless, to minimize the effects of ongoing park operations associated with guided activities, a series of mitigation strategies have been included in the selected alternative to limit the potential for these effects to occur.

Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant effects; and

Degree to which the possible effects on the quality of the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks; and

Whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state or local environmental protection law.

No significant cumulative effects and no highly uncertain, unique or unknown risks were identified during preparation of the EA or during the public comment period. The selected alternative will not violate any federal, state or local environmental protection laws.

Impact Mitigation Matrix

The following matrix identifies the impacts and mitigation documented and discussed in the Environmental Assessment. This summary assigns responsibility for ensuring that the measures, which minimize these impacts, are implemented as part of the selected alternative.

All mitigation measures described in this section will be implemented. Further mitigation measures may also be developed in response to ongoing informal consultation and implementation of the Commercial Services plan and could augment the measures described below. The measures identified below are designed to ensure that impacts to park natural and cultural resources, visitor use/experience and park operations are avoided, minimized or mitigated.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES PLAN IMPACT MITIGATION MATRIX

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
COMMON TO		COMMON TO ALL	
ALL		General Conditions	
		Park Operations Commercial groups must follow park rules and regulations, including not accessing areas off limits to independent visitors. (All resource categories)	
		Define interim maximum allowable use limits for commercial services that will be in effect until revisions to this plan, the Wilderness Management Plan or carrying capacity studies have been completed. Set interim limits for the maximum number of commercial clients and guides and user nights, as well as the number of trips for the activities described in the plan. (All resource categories)	
		Maximum group sizes (12 and 5) have been designated for activities described in the plan. (All resource categories)	
		Approved activities, if found to be incompatible with resource protection, visitor enjoyment and/or visitor safety may be suspended or terminated. (All resource categories)	
		High and low elevation commercial free areas have been designated. (All resource categories)	
		To expedite entry into the park, commercial operators would collect all cost-recovery and entrance fees from their clients for the park. (Park Operations)	
		Concessioners could compete for CUAs not related to services authorized through their concessions contracts. CUA holders could compete for concessions contracts. (Park Operations)	
		CUA holders found in violation of their CUA may have their permits suspended or revoked and would generally be ineligible for subsequent authorizations. (All resource categories)	

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
		Concessioners found in violation of their contracts would be managed through the provisions of 36 CFR Part 51 and current NPS policies. (All resource categories)	
		A new commercial services evaluation process would be implemented that includes evaluation of impacts to all park resources. (All resource categories).	
		Resource Protection Commercial service providers would give their park employees and guides an introduction to NPS and park mission and values and would share this information with their clients.	
		Commercial groups would follow Leave No Trace principles and practices. (Air Quality, Water Quality, Soils and Vegetation, Visitor Experience)	
		Commercial groups would use established toilets where available and the blue bag system for winter and high elevation human waste disposal.	
		Except in winter, or when entirely on snow, commercial groups would use designated trails or standard routes, designated camps and campsites to conduct their activities. During melt-out, commercial groups would follow marked trails.	
		Transportation To reduce traffic congestion and to maximize available parking, all commercial services are required to provide in-park shuttle transportation for their employees and clients with the exception of day guides, who may also travel in client vehicles.	
		To ensure adequate access for independent visitors, no more than 2 commercial vehicles can be parked at a trailhead at one time (this does not include the upper Paradise parking lot, the Longmire parking lot or the Sunrise parking lot).	
		Visitor Experience For backcountry climbing and camping, summer regulations start May 15 or when the snow depth is less than 2 feet—whichever is earlier. Summer regulations end on September 30 or when snow depth is more than 2 feet—whichever is later.	
		Winter regulations start on October 1 or when snow depth is more	

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
		than 2 feet—whichever is later. Winter regulations end on May 14 or when snow depth is less than 2 feet—whichever is earlier. In the Paradise area, the same dates apply; however, the determining snow depth is 5 feet instead of 2 feet. It therefore is possible to have winter regulations and summer regulations applied at the same time in different locations in the park.	
		Drive in campground reservations would be made through the park or public reservation system in competition with the public.	
		Because the ability to use designated backcountry individual or group campsites must be allocated for commercial parties (except for concessioners guiding on <i>Other</i> climbing routes), spaces would be reserved in advance of the opening of the public reservation system. Spaces requested after the opening of the reservation system each year would be reserved in competition with the public (commercial service providers and the public would be reserving spaces at the same time).	
		There would be no more than one commercial group per cross-country zone, alpine zone or designated camp, except at Camps Muir, Schurman and on the Kautz Route.	
		The Paradise non-wilderness area would be limited to two overnight commercial groups per night in winter.	
		Groups of 12 or fewer could travel and camp in cross-country zones (on snow) in winter. Only climbing groups of 5 or fewer could use alpine zones in summer (except on Muir, Emmons and Kautz Routes) and excluding commercial free areas.	
		Measures Specific to Guided Climbing Overnight spaces for concessioners would be allotted at the beginning of each season (except for Other Routes) and verified daily. Except for the Muir Snowfield group site, the unused portion would be made available to the public. (Visitor Experience)	
		Staggered starts would be used on the Muir, Emmons and Kautz Routes and rotating use would be used on the Kautz Route to minimize overlap at camps and to stay within the overnight limits for commercial groups identified in the plan. (Park Operations, Visitor Experience)	
		There would be no Friday or Saturday night stays for commercial	

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
		groups in Alpine Training courses or on the Emmons , Kautz or Liberty Ridge routes. (Visitor Experience, Park Operations)	
		Mountaineering Day Schools would occur on snow in the Paradise Day Use Area. (Water Quality, Soils and Vegetation)	
		Commercial groups would access climbing routes only via standard approach routes. (Water Quality, Soils and Vegetation)	
		Commercial groups would access the Kautz Route and Fuhrer's Finger via Paradise rather than Van Trump Park. (Water Quality, Soils and Vegetation)	
		A commercial group campsite would be designated on the Muir Snowfield, which would not be available through the public reservation system. (Soils and Vegetation, Visitor Experience)	
		Mountaineering training would occur enroute, in the Muir Mountaineering Day Schools or outside the park for climbs on Emmons, Kautz and Other Routes, as well as for Single Trip Guides. (Soils and Vegetation)	
		Measures Specific to Guided Wilderness (Winter and/or Summer) (For Winter Wilderness, see also Alpine Training and Additional Services below)	
		There would be no cross-country/alpine use in summer. (Water Quality, Soils and Vegetation)	
		No more than one night could be spent in any one designated camp. (Visitor Experience)	
		Groups of 5 or fewer would camp in individual sites, groups of 6-12 would camp in group sites. (Visitor Experience)	
		There would be no commercial overnight use of the Wonderland Trail in July and August. (Visitor Experience)	
		Measures Specific to Alpine Training Only the Alpine Winthrop, Alpine Paradise (Paradise Glacier) and Alpine Nisqually (Nisqually Glacier) areas would be designated for this activity. (Water Quality, Soils and Vegetation, Visitor Experience)	

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
		Groups would not be permitted to camp above10,500 feet in the Alpine Nisqually or Alpine Winthrop areas. (Visitor Experience) Alpine Training could occur for a maximum of four consecutive nights. (Visitor Experience)	
		Measures Specific to Additional Services All hiking would be on designated trails. Incidental hiking would be no more than one mile from trailhead. (Soils and Vegetation, Visitor Experience)	
		No guided day use winter trips could be conducted within a ¼ mile radius of developed areas at Paradise, Longmire or Sunrise. (Park Operations)	
		Guided day use could not be conducted at park Visitor Centers, the Paradise or National Park inns, Paradise Meadows or on the following trails: Nisqually Vista Trail, Ohanapecosh Hot Springs Trail, Grove of the Patriarchs, Trail of the Shadows, Sunrise Loop Trail, or Fremont Lookout). (Park Operations)	
		Firewood sales would only continue until campground fire use is reevaluated and/or redesigned as called for by the GMP. (Air Quality, Visitor Experience)	
Air Quality	Climbing Concessions Negligible to minor adverse impacts from delivery of supplies, helicopter use, heavy equipment and private vehicle use for commercial operations, propane stoves, and transport of commercial visitors.	Common to All above plus: There would be no idling of buses or shuttles (GMP requirement would be enforced).	Biologist Concessions Management Specialist
	Negligible increase in vehicle emissions from transport of more commercial climbers (Muir, Emmons, Kautz, Other and Single Trip Guides), followed by long-term negligible to minor beneficial impact from use of shuttles and client caps, especially if increase in guided climbers resulted from redistributed, rather than new, visitors.		
	Long-term negligible decrease in emissions (due to small number of participants compared to park visitation) from increased requirement for use of shuttles and cessation of helicopter transport of supplies for concessioners and decreasing flights due to improved human waste management over time.		
	Negligible decrease from transport of slightly fewer clients (144 vs.		

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	180) for alpine training and/or transport of those clients on vehicles already needed for climber shuttles within the park. Negligible to minor increase in vehicle emissions from visitors drawn to an increased number and array of guided winter day use activities.		
	Negligible increase in emissions from provision of overnight winter wilderness trips.		
Air Quality	Summer Wilderness Same as first paragraph climbing, plus: Slight increase in number of vehicles (for 5 CUAs) transporting visitors would be balanced by fewer visitors overall being transported.	Same as above	Same as above
Air Quality	Winter Wilderness Same as first paragraph climbing, plus: Negligible to minor increase from increased number of guided winter day use activities.	Same as above	Same as above
Air Quality	Additional Services Same as first paragraph climbing, plus: Initial negligible increase in vehicle emissions related to shuttle transport due to increased number of CUAs (Day Guiding, Guided Bicycling, Westside Bicycling Tours, Photography and Art Tours, etc.) coupled with negligible beneficial impact if some visitors who would have driven their own vehicles choose to go on guided trips via shuttle. Although visitor transportation shuttles (10 CUAs) would likely increase the number of visitors traveling together and decrease the number of private vehicles in the park, they would result in only a negligible to minor reduction in the number of private vehicles entering the park since the use of these shuttles would not be mandatory and their use would depend on convenience and/or incentives offered to park visitors. Localized minor particulate emissions from use of gravel roads, grading and minor fixes to Westside and Carbon River Roads to prepare surface for shuttle traffic. Particulate emissions along roads could contribute to slight decline in roadside vegetative health, which could affect species composition	Common to All above plus: Soil wetting would be used as needed during construction activities. There would be continued effort by the park to facilitate the development of a Visitor Transportation Plan. Low speed limits would continue to apply to the park's gravel roads to minimize dust generation.	Same as above

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	over time. Negligible to minor increase in emissions from unlimited number of road tours. Long-term minor decrease in emissions from provision of in-park shuttle transportation to the degree that it increases the propensity of visitors to travel together, especially on the Carbon River Road, where private vehicle traffic would be allowed until a major washout converts it to a shuttle road. Continued minor to moderate localized impacts from provision of wood for individual campfires.		
Water Quality	Climbing Concessions Negligible to minor impacts when Leave No Trace and other mitigation strategies are followed. Minor to moderate localized impacts where not employed (such as erosion from off-trail use, etc.). Initial negligible increase from additional commercially guided visitors over 2001, followed by long-term beneficial impact from required use of strategies to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts. Continued minor to moderate localized impacts from non-compliant behaviors (such as failure to use or deposit blue bags correctly). Long-term minor to moderate beneficial effect from new toilet at Camp Schurman. Minor localized impacts from gray water disposal/length of stay impacts on glaciers and or failure to use bluebags. Long-term beneficial effect from less concentrated gray water disposal coupled with minor adverse effect from no provision of concessioner water at Camp Muir.	 Common to All above plus: The following general strategies are employed by the park to limit water quality impacts from ongoing park operations: requiring permits for overnight use (these encourage minimum impact techniques, and ensure allowed use is consistent with established overnight wilderness limits); constructing trails in appropriate terrain, using established techniques; rehabilitating social trails; requiring designated trailside camps a minimum of 200 feet from water sources; locating toilets (pit, composting or solar) at trailside camps. establishing the blue bag system for winter and high elevation human waste disposal; minimizing group sizes in wilderness (overnight party sizes of 12 or fewer and 5 or fewer); limiting the use of sensitive areas by large groups In addition, park commercial groups would be required to: use impact minimization techniques, such as Leave No Trace; use biodegradable soap and dispose of gray water more than 200 feet from water sources; use maintained or established way trails to limit establishment of social trails and consequent soil erosion; use rest stops on snow, or durable or established areas; camp and recreate on snow, rather than on fragile subalpine or alpine plant communities; use blue bags during high elevation travel; and to 	Biologist Chief Ranger Concessions Management Specialist

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
		walk on snow, rather than sensitive emerging vegetation, whenever possible. There would be improved human waste management practices over time, most notably at Camp Muir, where a site specific Development Concept Plan is pending and which will, among other issues, address human waste. Groups traveling or camping in cross-country or alpine areas to access climbing routes would use previously impacted or designated sites if present. Construction of a self-contained toilet at Camp Schurman which would not release waste into the surrounding environment.	
Water Quality	Summer Wilderness Negligible decrease in impacts due to fewer participants than 2001 baseline followed by long-term decrease due to designation of commercial use limits. Continued minor to moderate localized impacts from non-compliant behaviors, such as failure to use toilet facilities or waterside trampling not at water collection sites, or improper disposal of gray water.	Common to All above plus: No cross-country travel and camping in summer. All hiking would be on designated trails. Large and small commercial groups would be required to use designated trailside camps.	Same as above
Water Quality	Winter Wilderness Same as summer wilderness.	Same as above	Same as above
Water Quality	Additional Services Negligible to minor increase in potential for impacts associated with new or expanded CUA activities. Negligible beneficial effect from new commercial services evaluation process by avoiding, minimizing or mitigating impacts before new commercial services are approved.	Same as above	Same as above
Geological Hazards	Climbing Concessions Moderate additional number of commercial visitors exposed to existing and potential hazards on Westside Road (due to shuttle transportation provided). Negligible long-term beneficial impacts from required geological hazards orientation for guides and clients that would result in better informed commercial visitors.	Common to All above plus: Commercial service providers would give their park employees, within their NPS and park mission and values training, an orientation to geological hazards that could potentially occur within the park and what to do in the event of these emergencies. Service providers would also share this information with their clients, especially those who might be exposed to Case III geological hazards areas such as in the Westside Road and White River areas.	Fluvial Geomorphologist Concessions Management Specialist

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Geological Hazards	Summer Wilderness Same as climbing concessions (above).	Same as above	Same as above
Geological Hazards	Winter Wilderness Same as climbing concessions (above).	Same as above	Same as above
Geological Hazards	Additional Services Increased number of visitors in vicinity of better informed visitors in vicinity of Westside Road would result in minor beneficial and minor to moderate long-term adverse effects.	Same as above	Same as above
Soils and Vegetation	Climbing Concessions Initial negligible to minor increase in impacts from increase in number of commercial visitors over 2001, followed by long-term beneficial impact from cap and required use of strategies to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts. Negligible to moderate impacts attributable to commercial visitors during melt-out from trampling of emerging vegetation and confusion related to undesignated routes at the end of maintained trails. Long-term moderate to major beneficial impacts coupled with negligible to minor adverse effects by designating more routes and campsites and requiring commercial visitors to use standard approach routes. Designation of commercial campsite on Muir Snowfield could have negligible to moderate beneficial effects regarding rule compliance and a negligible beneficial effect by reducing (not replacing with independent use) the times when the campsite might be vacant. Long-term minor to moderate benefit from elimination of cross-country use for commercial groups. Lower potential for impacts in some areas due to designation of commercial free areas. Cumulative Short-term beneficial impact coupled with long-term minor to major adverse effect attributed to cap on commercial climbing and other aspects of visitor use against a background of increasing independent visitors.	 Common to All above plus: In addition to the personal, physical, written and regulatory strategies used by the park to modify the potential to impact soils and vegetation, the following additional strategies would be required: Commercial guides would be required to participate in formal orientation training to better understand the National Park Service and park's mission and goals and to share this information with their clients; There would be increased monitoring of commercial services by climbing, resource and concessions staff through the revenue generated from commercial services (a portion of which may be used for administration and monitoring); and There would be increased designation of campsites along climbing routes. The future potential for major impacts would be prevented by the seasonality of some climbing routes (thereby reducing the maximum potential use), development of revised Wilderness Management Plan and/or carrying capacity analyses implementation and the small contribution of commercial use compared to independent use, as well as the incorporation of strategies that would avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts. Measures Specific to Guided Climbing Mountaineering Day Schools would occur on snow in the Paradise Day Use Area. Allow commercial camping on the Muir Snowfield, but designate a commercial group only campsite. 	Plant Ecologist Chief Ranger Concessions Management Specialist
	Negligible to minor impacts associated with accessing the Alpine	Designate or define standard climbing route access paths through	

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	Winthrop and Alpine Nisqually/Paradise areas lessened by the required use of strategies that minimize, mitigate or avoid impacts.	typically snow-free areas above currently designated trails (past "end of maintained trail" signs);	
		Commercial groups would access the Kautz Route and Fuhrer's Finger via Paradise rather than Van Trump Park.	
Soils and Vegetation	Summer Wilderness Similar to Climbing Concessions (above) Fewer potential impacts from reduced number of trips.	Common to All above plus: No cross-country travel is permitted (walks/hikes must occur on designated trails).	Same as above
Soils and Vegetation	Winter Wilderness Similar to Climbing Concessions (above).	Same as Common to All above	Same as above
Soils and Vegetation	Additional Services Negligible to minor or moderate localized impacts from moderate increase in number of CUAs, depending on whether activities take place in or near developed areas on hardened surfaces or designated trails. Initial negligible to moderate increase in impacts (depending on the activity, where it took place and how well it was managed) from number of CUAs/clients over 2001, followed by long-term minor beneficial impact from the required use of strategies to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts. Negligible to minor additional disturbance to soils and vegetation from additional CUAs, which would primarily be concentrated in the same areas and seasons as now. Negligible beneficial effect from new commercial services evaluation process by avoiding, minimizing or mitigating impacts before new commercial services are approved.	Same as above	Same as above
Wildlife	Climbing Concessions Negligible to moderate localized adverse effects associated with the predictable rise and fall of human activity throughout park developed areas (3 percent) plus maintained trails (primarily high and moderate use trails and routes). Overall negligible to minor effects (primarily disturbance) on wildlife from commercial use and administrative helicopter use. Minor to moderate impacts (trampling) on wildlife habitat in alpine	Common to All plus additional strategies noted above under Soils and Vegetation plus: Administrative helicopter use would continue to avoid sensitive wildlife habitat and incorporate analysis of potential wildlife impacts, and travel over the shortest (or most appropriate, given wildlife analysis) path. Existing park regulations and policies would continue to prevent the feeding and harassment of wildlife.	Wildlife Ecologist Chief Ranger Concessions Management Specialist

Commercial Services Plan – Finding of No Significant Impact

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	and subalpine areas. Initial negligible to minor increase in impacts from increase in number of commercial visitors over 2001, followed by long-term beneficial impact from cap in use and required strategies to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts. Minimal effects (such as trampling) on wildlife habitat with most commercial use continuing to occur in or near developed areas and on designated trails and routes. Minor adverse impacts from designation of additional segments of trails (particularly above Pebble Creek and Glacier Basin) and campsites coupled with long-term beneficial impacts from the same action by reducing the number of social trails (and similar causes of habitat destruction). Negligible beneficial effect from designation of high and low elevation commercial free areas.	Ongoing park education and enforcement to limit food scraps and litter would continue. There would be additional designation of trail segments beyond the "end of maintained trail" signs. Campsite designation would also reduce impacts where campsites have developed in sensitive areas and where suitable durable sites exist nearby. Typically poor winter weather conditions would likely diminish the effects of increasing the potential for some day use commercial activities in winter. The park would continue to close sensitive areas to visitor use during breeding seasons as appropriate and would also continue to conduct ongoing environmental impact analysis/demographic studies on key species to determine the effects of park activities on them.	
Wildlife	Summer Wilderness Impacts similar to Climbing Concessions (above) Negligible beneficial effect from smaller number of people and similar	Same as above	Same as above
Wildlife	number of user nights. Winter Wilderness Similar to Climbing Concessions (above) Minor to moderate noise and disturbance from congregation and dispersal of visitors for an increased number of user nights and number of visitors participating in winter guided activities.	Same as above	Same as above
Wildlife	Additional Services Initial minor to moderate increase in impacts from number of CUAs/clients over 2001, followed by long-term decrease and required use of strategies to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts. Negligible to minor disturbance from additional CUAs, which would be concentrated in the same areas and seasons as now. Negligible beneficial effect from new commercial services evaluation	Same as above	Same as above

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	process by avoiding, minimizing or mitigating impacts before new commercial services are approved. Moderate localized disturbance and displacement of wildlife from increased use in the vicinity of Westside Road.		
Special Status Species	Climbing Concessions Increased human presence, shuttle vehicle use of the Westside Road and ongoing administrative helicopter would result in insignificant and discountable effects to federally listed murrelets, northern spotted owls and lynx. Northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet: Continued noise and disturbance associated with ongoing visitor and administrative use would be not likely to adversely affect these species during the nesting season and would have no effect during other times of year. Effects would be minimal due to the distance of most human activities from known nesting sites and because use would primarily be as a result of a redistributed mix of commercial and independent visitors. Lynx: The CSP would be not likely to adversely affect this species due to the dispersion of winter guided activities and the low likelihood that day use activities would result in a detectable increase beyond developed areas and because there would be no habitat removal or modification and no additional roads plowed or opened to winter use. Other special status species (bald eagle, peregrine falcon, grizzly bear, gray wolf, Pacific fisher, wolverine, bull trout, dolly varden, Chinook). No effect due to no activities conducted in sensitive areas, lack of presence, or no habitat effects in addition to strategies to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts of commercial use.	When nesting areas are found (during ongoing surveys) near designated wilderness camps or trails or other developed areas, areas are monitored more closely and closures enacted as appropriate to prevent disturbance. Administrative helicopter flights for human waste barrel placement and removal and re-supply of high camps originate from a helispot located above the elevation of both nesting northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets or from a helibase not located in suitable habitat. During the early nesting season, flights that originate at the lower helibase are required to fly 5,200 feet above the canopy, whereas during the late nesting season they may fly 2,600 feet above the canopy over suitable habitat. No suitable habitat would be removed or modified as a result of the proposed action. Where marbled murrelet occupied behavior has been documented, park administrative activities are also limited to the period from 2 hours after sunrise to 2 hours before sunset. As noted above helicopter flights and other administrative activities would continue to be restricted in known nesting areas (which would continue to be assessed through ongoing demographic surveys) throughout the nesting season. The proposed action would not result in any additional roads being plowed or opened to winter use and would not result in any habitat modification or removal beyond that which has already occurred in developed areas.	Wildlife Ecologist Concessions Management Specialist
Special Status	Summer Wilderness	Same as above	Same as above
Species	Same as above		
Special Status	Winter Wilderness	Same as above	Same as above
Species	Same as above		
Special Status	Additional Services	Same as above plus:	Same as above

Commercial Services Plan – Finding of No Significant Impact

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Species	Same as above plus: The resultant increased disturbance from additional hikers and the Westside and Carbon River Road single vehicle shuttles would be so small as to be immeasurable and therefore insignificant.	Shuttle vehicles on the Westside and Carbon River Roads would make no more than an estimated 10 trips per day. The resultant increased disturbance from additional hikers and the shuttle would be small and immeasurable and therefore insignificant.	
Prehistoric and Historical Archeology	Climbing Concessions No adverse effect Negligible effects from creating designated trails from current "end of maintained trail" areas to minimize effects of social/way trail erosion and from designating campsites where campsites are already in use.	Common to All above plus: Before project implementation, areas proposed for trail extensions or campsite designation would be delineated, surveyed and monitored (as appropriate) to ensure no adverse effect on archeological resources. If prehistoric or historic archeological resources were discovered during any portion of a proposed action, work in the area associated with the find would cease until evaluated by the park archeologist or designated representative. If necessary or possible, relocation of the work to a non-sensitive area would occur to enable more site testing and documentation. Every effort would be made to avoid further disturbance to the site.	Archeologist/Cultural Resources Specialist Chief Ranger
Prehistoric and Historical Archeology	Summer Wilderness Same as Climbing Concessions (above).	Same as above	Same as above
Prehistoric and Historical Archeology	Winter Wilderness Same as Climbing Concessions (above).	Same as above	Same as above
Prehistoric and Historical Archeology	Additional Services Same as Climbing Concessions (above). Negligible potential for adverse effects from grading and vegetation removal along Westside Road. Negligible beneficial effect from new commercial services evaluation process by avoiding, minimizing or mitigating impacts before new commercial services are approved.	Same as above	Same as above

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Ethnography	Climbing Concessions No effect	Common to All above plus: No proposed actions would change current Native American use of	Archeologist/Cultural Resources Specialist
	No cricci	existing areas. No new areas are proposed for use.	Concessions Management Specialist
Ethnography	Summer Wilderness No effect	Same as above	Same as above
Ethnography	Winter Wilderness No effect	Same as above	Same as above
Ethnography	Additional Services	Same as above	Same as above
	No effect		
Historic	Climbing Concessions	Common to All above plus:	Historical Architect
Structures	No adverse effect	Actions that would be undertaken as part of future planning efforts	Concessions Management Specialist
	Long-term moderate beneficial effect from removal of non-historic	(such as under the Camp Muir Development Concept Plan) would be designed to have no adverse effect on their contribution to the	
	Gombu shelter from vicinity of Camp Muir Historic District/Mount	Mount Rainier National Historic Landmark District or the Camp Muir	
	Rainier National Historic Landmark District.	Historic District.	
	The designation of no facilities contracts would not result in any	Basic preservation maintenance and/or rehabilitation measures	
	adverse effects on historic structures. Historic structures would	would continue to be undertaken to preserve the structures within	
	continue to be maintained as appropriate to preserve or enhance the characteristics which make them eligible for the National Register.	the area of potential effects covered by the plan. The need for these measures and their effects would continue to be the subject	
	and accessing miner make them engine for the national negister.	of consultation, as appropriate, under Section 106 of the National	
		Historic Preservation Act.	
		If replacement of the non-historic Gombu shelter were to be	
		undertaken or additional facilities constructed at Camp Muir, these	
		would be designed to be compatible with the NHLD and Camp Muir Historic District through early consultation with the SHPO.	
Historic	Summer Wilderness	Same as above	Same as above
Structures	No adverse effect		
Historic	Winter Wilderness	Same as above	Same as above

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Structures	No adverse effect		
Historic Structures	Additional Services No adverse effect Long-term moderate beneficial effect from re-established regular use of the Westside Road as a shuttle route.	Same as above plus: Rehabilitation of the Westside Road to serve as a shuttle route would conform to the road's inclusion on the National Register as part of the NHLD and would have no adverse effect on the road or its contribution to the NHLD.	Same as above
Cultural	Climbing Concessions	Same as above	Historical Landscape Architect
Landscapes Cultural	Same as Historic Structures (above) Summer Wilderness	Company of the compan	Concessions Management Specialist Same as above
Landscapes	Same as Historic Structures (above)	Same as above	Same as above
Cultural Landscapes	Winter Wilderness Same as Historic Structures (above)	Same as above	Same as above
Cultural Landscapes	Additional Services Same as Historic Structures (above)	Same as above	Same as above
Visitor Experience	Climbing Concessions Long-term beneficial effect to both independent and guided park visitors from continued regulation of visitor use. Short- and long-term beneficial effects from suite of required strategies that would collectively avoid, minimize or mitigate visitor use impacts on park resources and improve the overall visitor experience by minimizing the resource impacts noticed by visitors, thereby minimizing encounters with other visitors, while expanding opportunities for new services.	Common to All above plus: More specific requirements for commercial service providers would result in additional oversight of commercial activities and an increasing ability to avoid impacts to park resources before they have an opportunity to occur. Apply summer and winter seasonal use restrictions on the Emmons and Kautz Routes; reduce limits on Kautz and Other Routes; and establish limits and weekend restrictions for Liberty Ridge use to reduce summer crowding and attendant impacts on independents. Measures Specific to Visitor Safety	Chief Ranger Chief of Interpretation and Education Concessions Management Specialist Safety Officer
	Long-term beneficial effect on visitor enjoyment from increased sharing of knowledge about reducing resource impacts to guided groups. Long-term beneficial effect on commercial and independent visitors by	Concessioners would be required to train their employees and clients in safe practices associated with the activity being conducted. Maximum client to guide ratios have been designated for activities	
	establishing minimum client to guide ratios that could increase the safety margin associated with guided groups.	described in the CSP.	
	Long-term beneficial effect from establishing initial limits for commercial activities, better tracking of services, and required resource training for guides (and therefore clients).	Wilderness First Responder or First Aid and CPR requirements have been incorporated into guiding requirements for all backcountry and high elevation activities.	
	Long-term beneficial effect from establishing limits, thereby benefiting park resources and increasing the number of areas where visitors find	Avalanche training has been incorporated into all winter and high elevation guiding requirements.	

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
RESOURCE	resources in good condition. Beneficial effect by increasing the number of concessioners or CUAs, thereby increasing the potential to foster competition and choice among vendors. Moderate beneficial effects on visitor opportunity from great degree of competition and choice on all routes. Negligible beneficial effect on visitor access from expanded opportunity for Single Trip Guides. Minor beneficial effect by increasing the number of people and trips on available climbing routes. Negligible beneficial effect from concessioners being able to offer alpine training seminars. Negligible beneficial effect on commercial and independent visitors from defining Other Routes. Moderate beneficial effects on visitor use access and opportunity from concessioners able to diversify their trip offerings through the increased number and flexibility of trips available for concessioners to lead. Minor to moderate beneficial effect on potential commercially guided visitors from increasing route allocations on the Muir Route coupled with negligible adverse effect from decreasing allocations on the Kautz and Other Routes. Opposite effects would result from these same actions on independent visitors. Minor adverse effect on commercial visitors and long-term beneficial effect on independent visitors by restricting commercial groups to any	Mational or International technical guiding certification (lead guide) is required for Single Trip Guides. Maximum party sizes have been defined for the activities described in the plan. Mountaineering Day School Limits increased to be consistent with allocations for the Muir Route.	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	effect on independent visitors by restricting commercial groups to any one camp or zone (each activity). Negligible to moderate adverse or beneficial effect from increasing the range of new or expanded commercial activities depending on whether the effect was on other independent or commercial visitors.		
	Negligible to moderate beneficial or adverse effects on commercial and independent visitors from times and zones. Negligible adverse effect on independent visitors from Single Trip		

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	Guide reservations in advance of the public. Minor long-term beneficial effect on independent park visitor experiences during peak season, coupled with negligible adverse effects on commercial visitor experiences from inability to use some wilderness camps and routes on weekends and inability to use Wonderland Trail during July and August. Negligible to minor adverse effect on some visitors from short or long-term (depending on outcome of Camp Muir DCP) of not being able to stay in constructed facility at Camp Muir. Negligible adverse effect on visitor opportunities from reduced number of guided alpine wilderness activities.		
Visitor Experience	Summer Wilderness Similar to Climbing Concessions. Negligible to minor adverse effect on commercial service provider and visitor use opportunity/access due to only one trip per CUA and no weekend use in summer.	Same as Above	Same as above
Visitor Experience	Winter Wilderness Similar to Climbing Concessions. Moderate beneficial impact on increasing competition and choice among service providers by offering a wide array of new or expanded commercial services. Negligible to minor beneficial effect on visitor use opportunity by increasing the range of competition and choice for park visitors.	Same as Above	Same as above
Visitor Experience	Additional Services Minor beneficial effect from increased range of commercial services and increased competition for these services among guide services and for visitors. Negligible beneficial effect and negligible adverse effect from range of new services, with some visitors taking advantage of them and some visitors avoiding them. Minor long-term beneficial effects from increased dissemination of	Same as Above	Same as above

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	resource protection messages in a variety of settings coupled with minor to moderate short-term, localized adverse effects from the activities themselves, mitigated by monitoring and enforcement of permit conditions.		
	Long-term negligible beneficial effects to park resources and therefore visitor enjoyment of those resources from new commercial services evaluation process by avoiding, minimizing or mitigating impacts before new commercial services are approved.		
	Negligible beneficial effect from Day Guides regarding increased visitor use opportunities in winter.		
	Long-term beneficial effects on visitor access and enjoyment by increasing shuttle and other access and use of the Westside Road coupled with concurrent negligible short-term adverse effect as some visitors react to the change and a minor long-term adverse effect by increasing crowding in this area of the park that has remained somewhat less used due to difficulty of access in recent years.		
	Increased potential for visitor use conflicts on Westside (and later, Carbon River) Roads from expanded ability for Westside Bicycle Tours.		
	Potential for a moderate adverse effect (crowding) from providing shuttle transportation to some areas of the park, where previous access was limited by the size of the parking area.		
	Negligible long-term beneficial impact by increasing the number of towing services available within the park.		
	Negligible to minor beneficial effect from increasing visitor use opportunities to participate in road tours and from potential for these visitors to get park resource and values information from their tour guides.		
10/:Ld	Climbia Consosione	Common to All above	Wildenses
Wilderness	Climbing Concessions Helicopter use for search and rescue operations, spring and fall waste removal and resupply of high camps would continue to have a moderate short-term adverse effect.	Common to All above	Wilderness Coordinator Concessions Management Specialist
	Negligible to minor adverse effects associated with maintenance of high camps surrounded by wilderness.		

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	No effect on primitive, unconfined recreation and physical and mental challenge. No effect on opportunities for scientific study, etc.		
	No adverse effect on wilderness cultural resources values. Continued minor to moderate beneficial effect from preservation of cultural resources values in wilderness, particularly associated with the Mount Rainier National Historic Landmark District.		
	Negligible to moderate effect in initial reduction of crowding from eliminating weekend use of some popular overnight camps and July/August use of the Wonderland Trail camps for commercial visitors.		
	Negligible beneficial effect by discontinuing concessioner resupply flights to Camp Muir.		
	Minor beneficial effect from adopting a process (including conducting requisite environmental analysis) to determine the need for climbing route marking and other improvements.		
	Negligible effect on primitive, unconfined recreation from increasing the number of commercially guided groups.		
	Negligible adverse effect by increasing the number of designated trail segments and campsites.		
	Negligible to minor beneficial effect on not affecting the condition of park resources, thereby improving the ability to enjoy primitive, unconfined recreation by implementation of the strategies to avoid, minimize or mitigate resource impacts.		
	Minor to moderate beneficial effect on opportunities for scientific study, education, stimulation and inspiration from minor to moderate expansion in the types and number of opportunities for commercial visitors to learn more about the park.		
	Minor beneficial effect from additional introduction of commercial free areas and times.		
	Negligible to minor effects on solitude associated with increases in the number of commercial visitors compared to independent visitors (minor on Muir Route, and moderate to major on Emmons, Kautz and Other climbing routes).		

Increased minor to moderate contribution of commercial use to adverse effects on wilderness solitude on Muir Route. Minor to moderate effects on other climbing routes (Emmons, Kautz and		
Other).		
Summer Wilderness Negligible effects from fewer wilderness trips and more restrictions (no commercial use of Wonderland Trail camps during July and August). Some potential for displacement of summer guided wilderness trips to	Same as Above	Same as above
Winter Wilderness Potential decrease in winter solitude close to developed areas, particularly with respect to the increased ability of CUAs and	Same as Above	Same as above
Additional Services Potential for minor to moderate adverse effect on summer solitude if semi-primitive trails become transition trails as a result of greater visitor access, particularly in the vicinity of the Westside Road, but also at other areas where shuttle services increase the capacity formerly limited by the number of parking spaces. Potential decrease in summer solitude close to developed areas, particularly with respect to the increased ability of some CUAs and Road Tour guides to provide guided day hiking. Negligible to minor adverse effect on summer solitude from number	Same as Above	Same as above
or people participating in commercially guided activities.		
Climbing Concessions Common to All Impacts Alternatives 2-4: Long-term beneficial impact on park operations from increasing revenue associated with managing commercial operations. Minor to moderate adverse effect on park operations if additional time and staffing needed to manage more commercial operations is not allocated. Long-term beneficial effect from establishing limits on existing and new commercial services.	Common to All above	Chief Ranger Concessions Management Specialist
	(no commercial use of Wonderland Trail camps during July and August). Some potential for displacement of summer guided wilderness trips to other fairly crowded areas (such as the Northern Loop Trail) to run trips at the most favorable time of year (July and August). Winter Wilderness Potential decrease in winter solitude close to developed areas, particularly with respect to the increased ability of CUAs and concessioners to provide winter guided day use trips. Additional Services Potential for minor to moderate adverse effect on summer solitude if semi-primitive trails become transition trails as a result of greater visitor access, particularly in the vicinity of the Westside Road, but also at other areas where shuttle services increase the capacity formerly limited by the number of parking spaces. Potential decrease in summer solitude close to developed areas, particularly with respect to the increased ability of some CUAs and Road Tour guides to provide guided day hiking. Negligible to minor adverse effect on summer solitude from number of people participating in commercially guided activities. Climbing Concessions Common to All Impacts Alternatives 2-4: Long-term beneficial impact on park operations from increasing revenue associated with managing commercial operations. Minor to moderate adverse effect on park operations if additional time and staffing needed to manage more commercial operations is not allocated. Long-term beneficial effect from establishing limits on existing and	(no commercial use of Wonderland Trail camps during July and August). Some potential for displacement of summer guided wilderness trips to other fairly crowded areas (such as the Northern Loop Trail) to run trips at the most favorable time of year (July and August). Winter Wilderness Potential decrease in winter solitude close to developed areas, particularly with respect to the increased ability of CUAs and concessioners to provide winter guided day use trips. Additional Services Potential for minor to moderate adverse effect on summer solitude if semi-primitive trails become transition trails as a result of greater visitor access, particularly in the vicinity of the Westside Road, but also at other areas where shuttle services increase the capacity formerly limited by the number of parking spaces. Potential decrease in summer solitude close to developed areas, particularly with respect to the increased ability of some CUAs and Road Tour guides to provide guided day hiking. Negligible to minor adverse effect on summer solitude from number of people participating in commercially guided activities. Climbing Concessions Common to All Impacts Alternatives 2-4: Long-term beneficial impact on park operations if additional time and staffing needed to manage more commercial operations is not allocated. Long-term beneficial effect from establishing limits on existing and new commercial services.

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
	to guide ratios on increasing public safety.		
	Negligible to moderate effect from managing the distribution of increased numbers of concessions and CUAs.		
	Long-term minor beneficial and minor adverse impacts from locating a new toilet and perhaps storage at Camp Schurman.		
	Long-term negligible to minor adverse effect from increasing climbing on the Emmons Route on snow removal pressure to open the White River Road on time or early, depending on snow conditions.		
Park Operations	Summer Wilderness Negligible effect from managing a smaller number of CUAs.	Same as Above	Same as above
Park Operations	Winter Wilderness Minor effect from managing an increased number of CUAs who will in turn provide a greater range of services, particularly winter day use.	Same as Above	Same as above
Park Operations	Additional Services Minor to moderate effect from managing an increased number of CUAs who will in turn provide a greater range of services. Moderate long-term beneficial effect in minimizing the effects of commercial services on park operations, from new systematic evaluation of commercial services.	Same as Above	Same as above
Socioeconomic Environment	Climbing Concessions Minor beneficial impact on local communities from revenue associated with climbing concessions. Minor to moderate Increased financial viability of concessioner A over concessioners B and C based on increased allocation of guided climbing opportunities. Minor increased financial viability of concessioners due to increased ability to provide non-summit oriented opportunities in winter, including former guided alpine wilderness activities and guided wilderness winter day and overnight trips.	Common to All above	Concessions Management Specialist
Socioeconomic Environment	Summer Wilderness Negligible revenue from small number of trips.	Same as Above	Same as above
Socioeconomic Environment	Winter Wilderness Moderate revenue from relatively wide array of potential services and trips.	Same as Above	Same as above

Commercial Services Plan – Finding of No Significant Impact

RESOURCE	IMPACT	MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE IMPACT	RESPONSIBLE STAFF
Socioeconomic	Additional Services	Same as Above	Same as above
Environment	Moderate to major revenue from wide range of new and expanded		
	CUAs.		

Public Involvement

During the CSP planning process, several press releases and newsletters were distributed to people and businesses who had expressed interest in the plan, including a press release on 8-27-03 (Public Review Sought for Commercial Services Plan/Environmental Assessment), an article in the Fall (9-03) Edition of The Tahoma News (park newspaper), and a press release on 11-20-03 (Public Comment Period Ending for the Commercial Services Plan/Environmental Assessment), as well as another press release on 3-5-04 (Draft Commercial Services Plan Process Continues). The mailing list for these press releases and newsletters also included persons and agencies that have expressed interest in general Mount Rainier National Park proposed actions and events. Included were organizations such as The Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, The Mountaineers, Mount Rainier National Park Associates, as well as Native American Tribes, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Washington State Office of Historic Preservation, etc. The complete Plan/Environmental Assessment was sent to approximately 240 local libraries, organizations and individuals that requested it or that ordinarily receive full copies of park environmental analysis documents (see below). An additional 120 copies were distributed as a result of public meetings and other individual requests during the public comment period.

Beginning in spring 2002, the Commercial Services Planning Team conducted public scoping meetings in Ashford, Tacoma, Yakima and Seattle, as well as a park staff meeting in Longmire, to gather input about the future of park commercial services. These meetings resulted in 175 verbal comments given at the public scoping meetings, 25 email comments, and 6 letters, plus an additional 75 comments from the scoping meeting for park staff. As noted in the CSP, the comments from the public scoping meetings provided a springboard for discussion among planning team members and shaped the design of the alternatives presented in the Commercial Services Plan released in August 2003 with the Environmental Assessment. Because the Commercial Services Plan process closely followed the General Management Plan process, the planning team also relied on issues related to commercial services brought up during the GMP process.

The 90- day public comment period for the CSP/EA began on August 27, 2003 and ended on November 25, 2003. Four public meetings were held during this period (Yakima, Tacoma, Ashford and Seattle) to solicit comments on the CSP and EA. While some of the public meetings were not as well- attended as they could have been (Yakima and Tacoma), the Ashford and Seattle meetings were packed, and the response to the posting of the plan on the park's website and word- of- mouth communication among various user groups, especially clients of climbing businesses, resulted in an overwhelming response to the plan. By the end of October, it was clear that the public comments were going to exceed those received on the park General Management Plan. Over 1,900 emails or letters (just less than 10 times those received on the GMP) were received from every state and several foreign countries. The responses represented federal and state agencies, elected officials, Native Americans, non-profit groups and individuals. Because most letters contained comments on more than one issue associated with the CSP, these letters were entered into a database that in the end comprised well over 6,446 distinct comments on the CSP and EA. Most of the public comments were received via the internet. Because of the overwhelming response, the park continued to accept public comments that closely followed the close of the public comment period.

Of a 600 copy printing run, 410 copies were distributed to agencies, individuals requesting copies and to those who attended the public meetings. In addition, the plan and Environmental Assessment were available on compact disc and on the park's website.

The public comment period and the several press releases put forth by the park before, during and after it also resulted in publication of 23 known news articles, including in the following publications on the dates shown: *The News Tribune* (Tacoma) (8-28-03, 9-17-03, 9-20-03, 1-1-04, 3-11-04); *Seattle Times* (8-29-03, 9-22-03, 12-30-03); *Seattle Post Intelligencer* (8-20-03, 9-22-03, 11-28-03); *The Dispatch* (Eatonville) (9-10-03, 11-1-03, 12-3-03); *Yakima Herald* (9-11-03, 9-18-03); *King County Journal* (9-23-03, 3-14-04); *The Daily Herald* (Everett) (11-26-03); *Outside Magazine* Online (11-18-03); *Great Outdoors.com* (4-29-04); *Bremerton Sun* (6-14-04); and the *Wall Street Journal* (6-25-04).

From November 2003 through March 2004, public comments were entered, sorted and analyzed. Throughout March, April and May 2004, the planning team reconvened numerous times to discuss the public comments and to develop the selected alternative. This alternative, other analyses, and the final plan were developed over the following months and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) prepared by March, 2005. (An *Errata* was also prepared to note minor corrections and clarifications to the EA, and to respond to substantive public comments. This document will be made available to recipients of the EA and final plan).

Summary of Public Comments

The greatest number and variety of public comments received on the CSP related to the provision of concessioner guided climbing on Mount Rainier. Overwhelming support was expressed for an increased number of service providers, although how many concessions there should be or how the increase or decrease in guided climbing should be distributed among climbing routes varied widely. Comments identified both beneficial and adverse consequences of multiple guide services on Mount Rainier. A large number of respondents did not comment on the text of the plan or EA, but rather responded to informational messages they received from various commercial businesses, some associated and some not associated with the park.

Strong support was received for the proposed new commercial guiding category – Single Trip Guides, however there was a great deal of confusion about the certification requirements that would be required of these guides. (Clarifications have been provided in the revised plan.)

While divided, the majority of respondents also favored the addition of commercial free areas. There were numerous variations on the commercial free idea which were suggested, many of which were already in the plan in one form or another. Although many park areas were specifically mentioned, there was no clear consensus about most of the areas included in the proposed commercial free zone with the exception of Liberty Ridge. Most respondents, who commented on Liberty Ridge being included as a

commercial free area, favored its return to commercial use. Based on public comments and staff analysis, a new low elevation commercial free area was also added to the selected alternative to address concerns voiced by independent wilderness visitors and because of further analysis of the proposal to formally designate commercial free/commercial use areas in the park.

Many comments were concerned with a perceived overall reduction in the amount of guided climbing or in the number of guides. While the plan did call for a reduction in the maximum potential use, it proposed limits that, in reality, exceeded the highest actual levels ever achieved on the Mountain. Peak season daily limits were, however, not as high as had previously been possible. (In the selected alternative, actual limits remain above the peak season average, while the potential for dramatically increased commercial climbing and other activities has similarly been decreased.)

Over 30 variations for the guided climbing alternatives were proposed. While these did propose changing the number of, or limits for, concessioners on various routes, or the ability to implement other alternative variations (such as client to guide ratios, commercial free times or seasonal limits), they were well within the range of alternatives evaluated in the EA and would not result in substantial differences to the degree of environmental impacts described in the EA. (Notable differences are detailed in the Errata.)

While most respondents identified an alternative preference (the majority favored Alternative 3), most did not clarify the reasons for their preference. Quite a few respondents also expressed dissatisfaction that only Alternative 3 offered more than one guide service on the most popular route (Muir).

Although public comments overwhelmingly favored competition, analysis of these comments was unable to ferret out (for many of the comments) what most appealed to respondents about competition – competition in the selection process, competing guide services on the same routes, competing guide services on different routes, equal allocations of guiding business, the potential for better services or more reasonable costs, or another aspect of competition. Most likely, for many respondents, it was a combination of the factors listed above, as well as others discussed in more detail in the Response to Comments (see Errata). For other respondents who mentioned all of these and more, it was clear that many aspects of competition, including the principle of a healthy marketplace itself, appealed to them.

Camp Muir topped the list of comments about operational concerns. Many respondents were stymied about how the camp and its systems would be managed with respect to the multiple guide services proposed for the Muir Corridor, given the other tenets of the plan. Numerous creative ideas were put forth about how the camp could be managed or conversely why camp management would not work with multiple guide services. These comments resulted in a closer examination of operational issues at Camp Muir by the planning team and some minor revisions and clarifications to the proposed alternatives as noted in the Errata. In contrast, there were very few comments about the operational issues of multiple guide services on routes other than Muir. (As noted in the previously

released plan and EA, the park will complete a separate, site- specific DCP planning process for the Camp Muir area).

In addition to comments about Camp Muir itself, there were a fair number of concerns about whether and how the Muir Route would be maintained to preserve its status as a novice route for both independent and guided climbers. Again, there were some unique suggestions and solutions to address the issue of how the established route aids could be used by multiple guide services as well as comments that indicated sharing could not be achieved.

Respondents were divided about the relative safety of guided vs. non- guided groups. Many cited now infamous climbing accidents related to either guided or non- guided climbers in support of their stated viewpoint. Some expressed disbelief that the relative safety of climbers would even be considered an issue in the provision of guided climbing limits, given that accidents befall both the prepared and the unprepared without preference for either user group.

A unique set of comments on the plan compared the guided climbing experience on Mount Rainier to other mountains of the nation and the world. There were many fascinating stories of antagonism and cooperation and unique visitor experiences related in an effort by respondents to confirm or deny the ability of multiple guide services to work together.

Numerous respondents questioned the ability of the park to identify commercial visitor use limits in the absence of independent visitor use limits or in the absence of modifications to the Wilderness Management Plan. There were also many comments about the sanctity of limits identified in the Wilderness Management Plan and questions about how they could be/have been modified over time in response to changing conditions.

A similar number of respondents also were concerned about the effects of commercial use limits prior to definitive carrying capacity studies or about the longevity of the proposed limits. Some were confused about the use of the 2001 "baseline" data in the plan and its projection as the basis for the No Action Alternative. (As noted in the previously released plan and EA, the limits are, in fact, interim limits and could be revised pending future revisions to the Wilderness Management Plan or carrying capacity analyses. The rationale for the limits is explained both in the previously released documents and in the Response to Comments – see Errata.)

There were a large number of comments relating personal experiences of independent and guided climbers concerning the relative merits of various commercial guide services, including the ability of these guide services to provide visitor experiences different from, superior or inferior to those provided by the current concessioner. While these provided interesting evaluative material for future operations, they were of limited value in modifying the alternatives.

While most of those who commented on the plan and EA could be identified as commercial guide service clients, there were also many comments from independent climbers. These respondents expressed concern with the large commercial groups encountered in the past at the park; difficulty in the ability to get permits given the ability of commercial guides to reserve sites in advance of the public reservation system; the ability to experience wilderness solitude (given the higher guided climbing limits on some relatively low use routes); and need to more closely manage some routes to avoid conflicts (including territoriality) between independent and commercial user groups; etc.

There were also a number of general comments about the means to determine the qualifications of various commercial guides and guide services; the need to motivate commercial operators to provide exceptional service; the need to enforce and more formally educate visitors about current resource protection measures; and the need for ensuring that guide services and the visitor experiences they provide are monitored for compliance with Leave No Trace, messages that affirm and stimulate clients to support the preservation and public use mission of the NPS and the park, as well as on first aid and safety requirements.

Many businesses commented on the minimal limits associated with guided wilderness opportunities (given the much greater capacity of park wilderness and the dramatically higher limits and percentage of total use proposed for guided climbing concessioners). Many independent visitors countered this perspective by commenting on the already overcrowded nature of the park's wilderness camps during the peak season, a fact supported by analysis of wilderness use in the EA. There were also a few comments that supported year- round cross- country use and more flexibility being allowed in the number and location of allowable trips.

As a result of several comments regarding the number of permits (particularly CUAs) that would be required to conduct various guided activities and on the seemingly artificial separation of guided activities into climbing, wilderness, alpine wilderness and additional services, many of these have been recombined to form the selected alternative. In addition some overly restrictive categories (mountain circumnavigations and Muir Winter Guides, for instance) have been modified to increase flexibility in their use by both businesses and visitors.

Some businesses and individuals were concerned with the financial feasibility of both the climbing alternatives and the other guided visitor services CUAs. While a financial feasibility analysis was conducted (as noted in the EA) for the guided climbing alternatives, one was not conducted for the CUA services because these are not intended (by the use of this authorization instrument) to be stand- alone businesses, rather they are often part of a more diversified service provider's portfolio. Some businesses and individuals were also concerned with how the CSP would be implemented in terms of permit allocation and phasing issues. Some of those concerns have been addressed in the revised plan, however many will need to wait for the implementing regulations for Section 418 of PL 105- 391 to become final and/or for the response to the prospectus or various CUA calls.

Similar to the GMP planning process, there were numerous comments about shuttle transportation. While very few respondents overall commented on the various instruments that would be used by the park to manage commercial use, there were many comments questioning why shuttles had not been made a concession. Although most respondents favored shuttle transportation planning, most also did not think a viable business model had been proposed in the plan (given the maximum two year timeframe for with CUAs) and therefore thought that the plan did not go far enough in finding a means of implementing shuttle transportation in the park. While the baby steps approach was, in fact, acknowledged in the draft plan, some additional clarification has been added to the selected alternative to address this issue.

With respect to resource preservation and impacts, comments from both independent and guided park visitors identified compliance with resource protection measures, such as LNT as more problematic with the other group.

Finally, there were a wide array of comments on the planning process, including questions regarding the sequencing of park planning efforts; questions about the appropriateness of actions proposed in the CSP given previous park plans; and comments about potentially missing information and the timing of the process.

Conclusion

The public comment response to the plan and EA was, as noted above, considerable. Unlike the public scoping comments, which were fewer in number and more vague, the comments on the plan and EA provided a sound means to gauge the sensitivities and viewpoints of both independent and commercial visitors, as well as the businesses who would like to either begin to or continue to conduct operations in the park. There were few specific comments on the adequacy of environmental analysis, especially with respect to questions regarding the significance of the proposed actions and their effects on park resources. Neither public comments nor agency reviews identified any significant environmental impacts that would occur with the adoption of the Commercial Services Plan. Although the comments were highly focused on guided climbing issues, they ranged broadly over the issues addressed in the plan. As might be expected, there were also many singularly poignant comments about many issues that, upon further discussion and analysis by the planning team, often proved to be instrumental in effecting changes in the revised plan to address the majority of viewpoints expressed by other individuals.

Agency Consultation

The initial threatened and endangered species list request from the NPS to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (to begin Section 7 Consultation under the Endangered Species Act) was on January 13, 1999. After several delays in planning, the species list provided by the USFWS on June 27, 2003 was the one used in the consultation. Upon final development of the revised plan and selected alternative, the NPS once again contacted the USFWS to obtain concurrence with the determinations of effect in the EA. That concurrence was provided on January 20, 2005. The USFWS also received copies of the scoping and other press releases noted above along with the plan and EA when it was released. The plan and EA were, however re- sent in winter 2004 with the request for concurrence. On

January 20, 2005, the USFWS concurred with a Not Likely to Adversely Affect on marbled murrelets, northern spotted owls and lynx.

Initial notification of the development of the Commercial Services Plan and EA was also made to the Washington State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) with the mailing of the scoping press release on the plan. SHPO responded with a request to ensure that Native American and historic preservation issues were considered. The ongoing work on the plan was also mentioned by park Historical Architect, Ellen Gage to Steve Mathison from the SHPO, in the context of several meetings held to discuss other unrelated and related (Camp Muir DCP planning) projects. Finally, on September 24, 2004, a request for concurrence with a determination of "no adverse effect" for the actions contained in the Commercial Services Plan was sent to the SHPO. That concurrence and response was received on October 7, 2004.

Impairment Disclosure

In addition to determining the environmental consequences of the preferred and other alternatives, NPS policy (*Management Policies 2001*) requires analysis of potential effects to determine whether or not actions would impair park resources. To ensure fulfillment of the NPS mission, NPS Management Policies also requires decision makers to consider impacts and to determine in writing (before approving an action) that a proposed action will not lead to impairment of park resources or values.

The fundamental purpose of all units of the NPS is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

As a result, NPS managers seek ways to avoid or to minimize, to the greatest degree practicable, adverse impacts on park resources and values. Impacts to park resources and values may occur when necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of a park, as long as these impacts do not constitute impairment of the affected park resources and values. Impairment is an impact that, in the professional judgment of the NPS manager, would harm the integrity of park resources or values, including the opportunities that would otherwise be present for enjoyment of these resources or values. Management Policies (NPS 2001) provides further guidance for NPS decision- makers to use in analyzing whether a proposed action would result in impairment.

An impact is more likely to constitute impairment to the extent that it affects a resource or value whose conservation is

- Necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park;
- Key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to the opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or
- Identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant National Park Service planning documents.

An impact would be less likely to constitute impairment to the extent that it is an unavoidable result, which cannot reasonably be further mitigated, of an action necessary to preserve or restore the integrity of park resources or values.

As with many of the management actions considered by the NPS, the careful balance of sometimes competing park resources and values is an important component of the environmental analysis and decision- making process. All elements of an NPS action, however must avoid impairing park resources.

Though providing for the enjoyment of park resources and values by the people of the United States is also a NPS mandate, the NPS has been directed by Congress that in cases where there is a conflict between conserving resources and values and providing for the enjoyment of them that conservation is considered predominant.

The EA identified and evaluated impacts to a host of park resources and values, an analysis that considered the severity, duration, and timing of direct and indirect impacts. The impacts disclosed herein occur in areas that have long been cornerstones of visitor use. The EA found that there will be no major adverse impacts to a resource or value whose conservation is 1) necessary to fulfill the specific purposes identified in the park's enabling legislation; 2) key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or 3) identified as a goal in the park's General Management Plan or other relevant planning documents. Consequently, the proposed action will not result in impairment of park resources or values.

The selected alternative was chosen because it best accomplishes the legislated purposes of the park and the statutory mission of the NPS and the purpose and need for the plan.

Upon approval, some portions of the selected alternative will be implemented immediately, while others will be implemented as soon as practicable, pending other commercial use- related legal requirements, funding and staffing.

Finding

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment as summarized above and in the *Errata*, it is the determination of the National Park Service that the selected alternative is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Nor is it an action without precedent or similar to an action that normally requires an Environmental Impact Statement. This conclusion is supported by the environmental analysis and listed mitigation measures, which will reduce or eliminate impacts. There were no significant cumulative or indirect effects or connected actions identified during analysis. Therefore, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

The conclusions of non- significance are based on environmental analysis of the potential, foreseeable impacts and on the mitigation measures that were included to avoid, reduce or eliminate other potential impacts that could be associated with the

Commercial Services Plan – Finding of No Significant Impact

selected alternative. This conclusion also included due consideration for the general nature of public comments. The USFWS and SHPO have concurred with these findings.

Recommended:		
/SIGNED/	3/22/05	
David V. Uberuaga, Superintendent Mount Rainier National Park	Date	
Approved:		
/SIGNED/	3/30/05	
Jonathan B. Jarvis, Regional Director Pacific West Region	Date	